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Watergate Probers In N.H. Under Fire

By Lawrence Meyer
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The governor of New Hampshire and the publisher of the state's largest daily newspaper telegrammed Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) yesterday protesting the presence of Senate select Watergate committee investigators in New Hampshire.

"Will you kindly get your gestapo boys out of New Hampshire and stop wasting the taxpayers' money trying to clear your buddy Sen. (Edmund S.) Muskie," William Loeb, publisher of The Manchester Union-Leader wired Ervin, chairman of the Senate Watergate committee.

Gov. Meldrim Thomson Jr., a Republican, wired Ervin that "Two of your Watergate investigators descended on Dr. Roberto Alonzo and his family of Orford, N.H., yesterday in a fishing expedition on the so-called Canuck letter involving Sen. Muskie's presidential campaign."

Thomson described Alonzo as "an outstanding Cuban lawyer who for more than 10 years has supervised the Spanish legal publication of a law book company of which I was president until inaugurated as governor of New Hampshire . . . It is a disgrace that he and his

family should be harassed by your gestapo-like investigators," Thomson said.

Committee sources said that Alonzo was one of several persons interviewed during several days of investigation by eight committee staff members in New Hampshire in connection with the so-called Canuck letter.

One source said the investigators were trying to determine who wrote the letter, which purported to be written by a Paul Morrison of Deerfield Beach, Fla., and attributed a racial slur on Americans of French-Canadian descent to Muskie. The letter was printed in The Union-Leader on Feb. 24, 1972, during the presidential primary campaign but its author has never been publicly identified.

A committee source described the interview with Alonzo as cordial. Alonzo's wife said last night that Alonzo was not available for comment and she also declined comment.

Ervin responded to Thomson's telegram: "While your telegram contains some threats and much vituperation, it does not set forth a single specific fact to justify your harassment charge. If there be any such specific fact I will be glad to have you communicate it to me."

Ervin said that the Sen-

ate, in establishing the committee, was influenced by the following consideration: The light of the sun is the best disinfectant of physical corruption, and the light of truth is the best disinfectant of political corruption."

Although the investigators did not interview Loeb, they did question two of his reporters, Arthur Egan and Warren Pease, concerning the Canuck letter. Loeb told Ervin, "Your investigators (have) violated the Constitution of the United States and the First Amendment by interfering with the news and editorial management of a newspaper."

Referring to the Canuck letter, Loeb said, "It would be nice to pin this letter on your Republican opponents in the cause of your political vendetta against President Nixon and the Republican Party. Frankly, we don't care which one of you politicians cuts each other up the most, but we demand that you stop imitating Nazi Germany and Communist Russia in the use of your investigators in the state of New Hampshire whose motto is 'Live Free or Die.'

"Keep your cotton-picking hands off of the Granite State," Loeb concluded.

Ervin's office said it had no comment on Loeb's telegram.